THIS TO THE

KING and his COUNCEL.

Something in Answer to an

ORDER

MADE BY THE

House of Lords

FOR

The breaking up of the Meetings of the People of God in scorn called

QUAKERS.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, who are as the Sheep for the slaughter, all the day long killed.

And a Representation of the innocency of the People of God called *QUAKERS*, which meet to worship the true God in Spirit, within the County of *Northampton*.

An Answer to a false Information which behind our backs hath been given against us as it is upon Record in an Order made against us, dated the *30th of Septem* 1660. Subscribed by *John Brown*, Clerk of the Parliament, which hath been read both in open Sizes, and divers Steeple-houses, whereby people have been stirred up to persecute us.

LONDON, Printed for *Robert Wilson*, and are to be sold at his Shop, at the sign of the *Black-spread-Eagle* and *Wind-Mill* in *Martins l'Grand*, 1660.

Something in answer to an Order made by the House of Lords, for the breaking up of the meetings of the People of God scorn'd called Quakers.

Solomon saith, That *he that is first in his own cause, seemeth just, but his neighbour cometh and searcheth him.* And ye cannot be ignorant, that true Judgement cannot be given between party & party without hearing them both; therefore it should have been your honor to have search'd out the matter charged against us, by hearing our Defence, as wel as the Accusation of our Adversaries (*which we know they cannot prove*) before you had proceeded to pass Sentence against us. Therefore in the fear of God consider, Have you not overshot your selves in passing an Order or Sentence against us (without first hearing us, and our Accusers, face to face) whereby that Christian Liberty which we have in Christ Jesus to meet together in his Name and Fear, hath been infringed; for men with armed force have come violently into our Meetings by vertue of your Order, & have molested us by dragging us forth, abusing and imprisoning some of us, when we were in the exercise of our Religion,

peace-

peaceably waiting upon God, & calling upon him for the good of all men; which molestation tends to the violation of the Word of the King, solemnly given, That we should not be disquieted nor called in question for our Religion, which doth not disturb the peace of the Kingdom: And it will provoke the Lord to anger against you, if you go about to scatter those that he hath sought out and gathered into one Spirit, to worship him, whom he will keepe as the Apple of his Eye: Therefore be wise, and learn to know his Counsel, that is from everlasting, least ye be found fighting against him with your Laws and Orders; but mind the Law eternal that God hath written in your hearts, and let your Laws be according to that of God, which was not made for the Righteous, but for the Transgressors; and judge no man before you hear him, and know what he doth, lest the *Jews* and *Romans* rise up in judgement with you, and condemn you, that profess to be Christians, for their Law judged no man before a hearing: Likewise you may remember that History declares how often the gentleness and simplicity of Princes hath been abused by malicious men, till they have been wrapped in remedilesse calamities, by satisfying the wills of such as make Religion a Cloak for their Covetousness, Ambition, and Envy, which will flatter and bow to men of Power, that they may make them the executioners of their malice, who thirst after the blood of the Saints, because they cannot give them money for that which is not bread, nor drink of the water which they have fouled with their feet; And least you should through the suggestions of fearful and unbelieving men (who know not the Truth) which is strongest of all, and therefore

think it cannot prevail against Errors without Magistrates help) wrap your selves in those remediless calamities which to persecute the innocent will inavoidably bring upon you; we cannot but represent these things unto you, and also the manner of our Meetings, more truly then they have done who have informed you on this wise:

That there are very great Assemblies of Quakers and Anabaptists conceived to be of Lamberts Party, who meet frequently in very great multitudes in Northamptonshire, plotting and contriving against the peace of Church and State, frequently casting out and dispersing several scandalous Papers against the Ministers, and their preaching the truth in Churches, to the great discouragement and scandal of good people.

To which we answer for our selves, who are called *Quakers*, That our Assemblies be neither with multitudes, nor with tumult; for we are but as the gleaning of the Vintage, even a small remnant, neither *of this*, nor *the other mans Party*, as men conceive; for we are redeemed from amongst the Multitude, Sects, and Parties, by the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Shepherd, and we are the sheep of his pasture, nourished and fed by him, and in his Name and fear do we assemble our selves together on the first day of the week, and at other times, as the Christians did; not to disturb the Peace of the Church nor State, but to worship our God in Spirit, and provoke one another to love, and to good works; as also to make prayer and supplication for all men, that they may come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved, and that we may see the peace and tranquility of the land of our Nativity, we do exhort men to lay aside all Clamor, Bitterness, and Envie,

ple, & come & walk in the Light of the Lord, that they may have fellowship one with another, as we have, who do in our hearts abhor all Plots and Contrivances tending to the breach of Civil Peace and Concord amongst men, or to the shedding of mans blood; for with flesh and blood we wrestle not, neither are our Weapons Carnal, but Spiritual, with which we war against Spiritual Wickedness; but as much as in us lies we labour to live in Peace with all men, though some do esteem us their enemies, because we tell them the truth, and being filled with envy, it breaks their peace to see us have a being in the land of our Nativity, as it did *Haman's* to see *Mordecai* sit in the King's Gate; and such labor to misrepresent our honest intentions, & say, *That our Papers and Declarations are scandalous against the Ministers of Christ, and their preaching the truth*; which Papers & Declarations do not touch the Ministers of Christ, who preach the truth in the Church which is made of lively stones, but are given forth as a testimony against such as do in words profess to be Ministers of Christ, but serves not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies; who every one seek their gain from their quarter, & feed themselves with the Fat, and cloath themselves with the Fleece; who preach for hire, and divine for mony, and prepare war against those who cannot for conscience sake put into their mouths, ruling over their flocks with force and cruelty, like those grievous Wolves which the Apostle said should come, *not sparing the flock*; and the Hirelings which Christ said *cares not for the sheep*, we say against such as these, and their changeable forms of Worship, which be not in the unchangeable eternal Spirit, but in the Temples made

made with hands, in which God dwells not, do we give forth our testimony, and not to scandalize nor discourage any good people, but rather to encourage them to seek the Lord their Redeemer, and walk in in his light, that they may not be made a prey on by men whose hearts are exercised with covetous practises; And this information we give you under our hands, that the innocency of our hearts may be known to you, and that the guilt of our innocent sufferings may not lie upon you: Ye may do well to revoke your former Order against us, or otherwise prevent execution of it as you shall see meet, after the good example of *Ahashuerus*, who upon a farther hearing of the Cause of the *Jewes*, stopped the *Decree* that upon *Haman*'s false information he had given out against them, which if it had been executed, might have wrapped him in a remedilesse calamity; but he foresaw the evil, and prevented it by altering his purpose, and providing that the *Jewes* and *all men* might live peaceably in his dominions, though their laws and manners differed from his; which if yee, and those that be in authority over us do the like, it may be a lengthning to your tranquillity, and we shall have joy and gladness, that In the land of our nativity we may live peaceably in the exercise of our Religion, which is pure, and keeps us unspotted of the world, in godliness and honesty: But & if you stop your ears against the crie of the innocent, & prescribe grievousness for us, and decree unrighteous decrees against us; then shall we, as it is given us of God, patiently suffer for a testimony against you, and the God in whom we trust will plead with you by his power, and deliver us; Therefore on him we will wait, for our expectations are from him.

Sub-

Subscribed in the behalf of our selvs, and the rest of our Brethren and Sisters that be in the fellowship of the Spirit with us in the County of Northampton, *the* 24th. *day of the* 8th. *month,* 1660.

John Whitehead
Francis Ellington
John Mackenes
Rich. Browne
Francis Stanly
Will. Wollton
James Garret
Robert Cox
John Hoton
Nicolas Freeman
Nicolas Day
Richard Pell
Thomas Green
Thomas Vice
Thomas Ollive
William Mather
Will. Page
John Parnel

William Lovel
Henry Roe
Thomas Gealing
Richard Panter
Will. Sharpe
Samuel Simcocke
Robert Burnell
Michael Gaines
Matthew Haddon
Richard Canwarden
Richard Smith
Laurence Key
Thomas Preston
John Rogers
John Garret
Peter Mackenesse
Joseph Garret
Benjamin Bradshew.

We desire to hear an answer from you, whether it be your minds that we should be torn out of our Meetings, and abused: You have been acquainted with sufferings your selves, therefore you are the fitter to consider of such things.

This

THis was given into the Kings hands upon the 6th. day of the 9th. Month, 1660. And he promised an Answer; and upon the 9th. day of the Month his Answer was *That he had given an Order to the Judges, that went the Circuits, concerning us; which Order was,* That we should be tenderly dealt with: And we were with the Judge, and he said, *That he was sorry that any hurt should be unto us concerning it; and that he would do for us what lyes in him concerning it:* And the Order was shewed unto one of the Lords of the House, who said, *He knew nothing of it; if there was such a thing, it is void now.* And we perceive it is contrary to the Kings mind, and his last Declaration, who saith these words following: In a word We do again renew what We have formerly said in our Declaration from Breda, for the Liberty of tender Consciences; that no man shall be disquieted, or called in question for difference of Opinion in matter of Religion, which do not disturb the peace of the Kingdom; and if any have been disturbed in that kind since Our arrival here, it hath not proceeded from any direction of Ours. And it is known, that our Meetings are kept in the fear of God, and have been persecuted by all rough Spirits in these changeable times, who peaceably meet to worship God in the Spirit and Truth, in that to build up and edifie one another, who have been persecuted by such who have had the form of godliness, but denied the Power, from which we are turned away, and have given our backs and hair to the smiter, have been as the sheep killed all the day long, and have not lifted up a hand against any one, but meets together in their several houses, as the Christians did in the primitive times; And here all people may see our Innocency; and likewise how unjustly we have suffered.

THE END.